

North Carolina (Mr. BALLENGER) that preceded me in the well talked about the surplus.

The surplus he talked about is the Social Security trust fund. It is raised through an unfair, flat, regressive tax capped at \$80,000 a year income. So the rich people are not putting in a penny over the little bit they pay on their first \$80,000 of income. Most working families are paying more in Social Security taxes than they are in income taxes to the Federal Government. In fact, many working Americans are not getting back a rebate because of that fact, but they do not mind too much because they know their money is going in the lock box created.

Now, what is in the lock box? Oops, well, not much money. There is something in here, though. Good, I owe you \$9 billion, signed Secretary Paul O'Neill, Secretary of the Treasury for George Bush, President of the United States.

So it seems that they are going back on their promise, are they not? We were going to have a lock box. They made a great show of voting on the lock box in the Clinton administration, but now with the Bush administration all things are changed.

It really doesn't matter whether we spend the Social Security surplus, that money intended for the trust fund for future retirees, today because the administration changed. Nothing else changed. We had all those votes to create the lock box, but suddenly the lock box isn't so important anymore, not as important as tax cuts.

Make no mistake, the tax cuts are the thing that are putting us in the hole. The Federal Government is borrowing, borrowing the money to send out those rebate checks which are against this year's estimated surplus which does not exist but is calculated on your last year's income. Follow that? Okay. What it means is cash the check quickly. It might bounce soon.

So this is the bizarre situation we find ourselves in. The Republican majority after touting lock boxes and saving Social Security and Medicare for so long, in their rush to please their wealthy benefactors and pass a massive \$2 trillion tax cut, particularly heavily oriented to those who earn over \$273,000 a year and estates over \$5 billion, they have already frittered away the surplus, and things look even more bleak for the future.

They are depositing IOUs back into the Social Security trust fund, spending the money today, now that it is time to talk about the possibility of, oh, my God, now they are in panic, some people are pointing this out, mindless, across-the-board cuts. First, let us jack up the military spending by 10 percent, then we will cut it by 3 percent and we might get back to putting something in the lock box. I doubt it. It is fuzzy math.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. There being no further requests for morning hour debates, pursuant to clause 12, rule I, the House will stand in recess until 10 a.m. today.

Accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 20 minutes a.m.) the House stood in recess until 10 a.m. today.

□ 0952

AFTER RECESS

The House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. Goss) at 9 o'clock and 52 minutes a.m., thereby terminating the recess.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Due to the circumstances of today, the Chair calls the House to order at this time.

The prayer will be offered by the guest chaplain.

PRAYER

The Reverend Gerard Creedon, St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Church, offered the following prayer:

God of peace and life, send Your spirit to heal our country; bring consolation to all injured in today's tragedy in New York and Washington. Protect us and help our leaders to lead us out of this moment of crisis to a new day of peace. Amen.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The House will stand in recess subject to the call of the Chair, pursuant to clause 12 of rule I.

Accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 53 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

□ 1003

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order at 10 o'clock and 3 minutes a.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer: O God, come to our assistance.

O Lord, make haste to help us.

Yesterday we were stunned, angry and violated. Today, Lord, we stand strong and together. Yesterday changed our world. Today we are changed.

We have humbly prayed to You, O Lord God of Heaven and Earth, yesterday and through the night. Now we turn to You for Your guidance and sense of eternal truths which built this Nation as we begin a new day of building security and peace through justice.

We mourn our dead and reach out with prayer and acts of compassion to all those families splattered with blood and exhausted by tears. Heal the

wounded. Strengthen all civil servants, medical and religious leaders as they attempt to fill the gaping holes left in the fabric of our Nation.

Send forth Your Holy Spirit, Lord, upon all the Members of Congress, the President, and all government leaders across this Nation. Free them of fear, any prejudice whatsoever, remove all doubt and confusion from their minds. With clear insight which comes from You and You alone, reveal all that is unholy, and renew the desire of Your people to lives of deepening faith, unbounding commitment, and lasting freedom here where liberty has made her home.

We place our trust in You now and forever. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. The Speaker will lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The SPEAKER led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. Due to the events of yesterday, the Chair wishes to announce that the joint meeting to receive the Honorable John Howard, Prime Minister of Australia, scheduled for today will not take place.

The Chair wishes to acknowledge, however, the presence of the Prime Minister here today, and extends, on behalf of the House, his appreciation for the solidarity of the Australian people and the presence of the Prime Minister today in this very difficult time. Thank you.

HOUSE SCHEDULE FOR THE DAY

(Mr. ARMEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, as you have directed, the House is convening now. We will stay in session from now until 11 o'clock where Members will have time for 1-minute speeches. At 11 o'clock this morning we will take a recess until 12:30 while the Chamber is cleared. Members of the body will be invited back to the Chamber at 12:30, at which time we will have a Member briefing on the floor that will last until 2 o'clock.

At 2 o'clock, Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT)